

SCIENCE.

EXTINCT VARIETIES OF THE PARROT.—Three kinds of birds, which were probably in existence a century ago, have disappeared. These were the Episcopus, a bird of Madagascar, the Drontes of Mauritius, and the Solitaire of Rodriguez, a small island in the Indian Ocean, half-way between Madagascar and Australia.

ARTIFICIAL NERVINE.—Prof. Wurtz. of the College of France, has succeeded by a synthetic process, in forming a product identical with that first obtained by Lieberkühn in 1855, who subjected a crystallizable substance derived from the brain, and containing phosphorus and nitrogen, to the action of strong hydrochloric acid. The artificial product shows the practical use of the one or two substitutions, of which he is, at present, the ablest advocate.

SANITARY SUCCESS.—From a paper read before the Society of Civil Engineers, in Exeter, on Saturday, by E. Latham, C. E., it appears that the towns are now governed by a system of drainage of 1845, and with great success, in the various instances. Twelve towns were named in which cases of typhus fever had been reduced from 40 to 25 per cent.; phthisis from 4 to 10 per cent. In one town, Croydon, the total saving in 13 years amounts to \$229,900.

HOTTINA.—This powder, invented by M. Hottin of Paris, will make lime fire-proof without impregnation, when mixed with equal quantities of starch and gum. The powder is prepared by adding a little ammonia to an acid solution of lime, and filtering with animal charcoal, then evaporating until perfectly dry. Five per cent of galactin silica is added; the whole is then evaporated, and the resulting crystals are pulverized.

POWDER FOR CLEANING JEWELRY.—The high price of an excellent powder much used by French jewelers in cleaning their articles, induced Dr. W. M. Jackson to invent it. He found it consisted of 40 per cent of oxide of iron and 30 per cent of chloride of ammonia (or ammonium). It is made by subjecting iron to the action of hydrochloric acid. After the hydrochloric acid is precipitated it is filtered at a very low temperature to prevent rapid evaporation.

OXYPHOSPHIC ACID.—C. G. Wheeler, in a note to the French Academy of Sciences, describes the action of aqueous hypochlorous acid on the esterases of turpentine and on camphor. From one of the chlorides of camphor, he obtained a body containing 16 per cent of carbon, 16 of hydrogen, and two of oxygen, which crystallizes when dissolved in alcohol, insoluble in water, and has an odor resembling camphor. Oxyanhydride of camphor is decomposed by water, and is isolated with the camphoric acid of Berthelot, and is removed by ether.

THE EMBRYO HEART.—HERS L. Schenck has published a paper on the physiology of the embryo. Examining the heart of the chick in the egg of the fowl, he discovered that its movements are, at first, quite independent of the central nervous system, and, induced by the action of the contraction of the protoplasm. When the heart is removed it still beats, if maintained at a temperature of 36° to 36° C. The most powerful microscope fails to show any trace of movement, hence he concludes that the contractions of the heart are due either to the action of heat on the protoplasm.

EFFECT OF ANTISEPTICS ON ANIMALCULES.—By allowing colicids, found in vegetable infusions, to come in contact with antiseptics while under the field of the microscope, Dr. Blod of Zürich has demonstrated that all kinds of disease-producing animalcules, chlorine and hypochlorite, will be destroyed. Chlorine, by its action on specific tissue, caused the creatures to burst; while a direct poisonous action was produced by nitro-, sulphur-, acetic, and tannic acids, peroxides, citric acid, cocaine, resorcin, etc. Bromine, iodine, bromine, and iodine, Acetic acid, and quinidin produced the most powerful effect. Neither salicin nor nitrate of strichina exerted any immediate influence.

HEAT GENERATED BY ELECTRIC DISCHARGES.—A paper recently read in the Berlin Academy by Foggeden, contains the following deductions from experiments made by the author:

The direct discharges of the machine are hotter than the positive at the negative pole.

The temperature of the poles varies with the force of the discharge. If the electrodes are spherical, the temperature is within certain limits—directly as the diameter of the sphere.

The elevation of the temperature between the electrodes depends on the intensity. Under like conditions, the more conductive the metal forming the electrode, the higher is the temperature produced.

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THE RADICAL.—THE RADICAL for March contains a paper by Samuel Longfellow, in which he proves by quotations direct from ancient writings, that the Religious Idea is universal, and that Christianity is older than Jesus. Price, 25¢ a year;

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